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Muslim shrines get Sadbhavna funds

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GANDHINAGAR: For the first time, the Pavitra Yatra Dham Vikas Board, the state government's nodal agency since 1995 for the care of prominent religious places, plans to fund the development of three Muslim religious sites. So far, the board has developed mostly Hindu temples and the Udvada Agiyari of the Parsis.

The board plans to fund and give technical assistance to develop infrastructure at Pir Kamal mosque in Danilimda, Ahmedabad; Pirana Dargah (located 18 km from Ahmedabad); and Mira Datar near Unjha in north Gujarat.

Sources in the state tourism and pavitra yatratham (pilgrimages) development department said according to the board's mandate, any religious trust which manages major religious bodies can apply for funding under the current 70:30 scheme. "If they are eligible according to the criteria, we fund them. However, so far only Hindu temples have been taken up for development. Some Muslim organizations had approached us for assistance. We explained the scheme under which the religious trust managing a particular site has to give the board a resolution along with an application saying they will bear 30% of the cost of the project while 70% will be borne by the state government," said an official.

Sources said the over 550-year-old Pir Kamal mosque has been approved for funding under the scheme. Professional agencies for redevelopment will be appointed shortly. These agencies will focus on developing public utilities in consultation with the Archeological Survey of India and the local trust. The work for its development is expected to begin in the next few months after the architects' agency prepares a draft development report, said the sources.

"Pirana Dargah and Mira Datar have also been selected for development. Formal approval by the concerned board is expected soon. Both the dargahs are visited every day by thousands of Muslims and Hindus; yet they lack basic amenities. Their respective areas too need to be developed. The new area development plan will focus on tourist utilities that also meet the needs of local residents," said a source.



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Hajarat Pir Imamuddin Bawa Roza is situated in Pirana village, which is about 18 km from Ahmedabad. Hajarat Pir Imamuddin Shah Bawa is believed to have founded the Satpanth sect around 600 years ago. The dargah has more Hindu followers than Muslims. The Hindu followers, called 'Satpanthisa', comprise 84% of the sect. Several of them are from Kutchhi Patel community. Muslim followers are called 'Saiyeds'.

The Dargah Sharif of Hazrat Sayyad Ali Mira Datar near Unjha in north Gujarat is also around 600 years old. Thousands of pilgrims — both Muslims and Hindus — visit the Dargah every year. All three sites are expected to witness considerable development in the next two years.

- 1.Satpanthis as descendents of Hindus who are in process of religious conversion to Islam
- 2.Saiyeds are religious heads of Satpanthis who preach Shia-Islam to satpanthis

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